stood up with very little help during the examination. He was placed in bed, his head was shaved, and evaporating lotions were applied; some aperient was also given, but he became more and more insensible for three days, when he died. On opening the head, nearly the whole of the upper surface of the brain was covered with coagulum, almost a third of an inch thick. The base of the skull was filled with coagulum, and there were two or three fractures crossing each other, extending entirely across the base. *This man walked nearly a quarter of a mile after the receipt of the injury.—Lancet*, Oct. 14, 1843. T. R. B.

67. *Death from Calomel and Blue Pill.*—At a late coroner's inquest in London, an individual aged forty years, was ascertained to have taken on the 9th of August, six grains of blue pill and three of calomel, which produced a mercurial fever, under which he sank and died on the 26th of September.

That so small a dose should produce so violent an effect, though extraordinary, is not unparalleled. Christison says, "Fifteen grains of blue pill, taken in three doses, one every night, have excited fatal salivation. Nay, two grains of calomel have caused ptyalism, extensive ulceration, exfoliation of the lower jaw, and death."

These are all warnings to the practitioner, to beware of a too free use of the above substances. In the present case, it was ascertained that the deceased had subsequently taken some pills of an unknown description, and we cannot, therefore, tell what agency they may have had in producing the fatal result.—*Lond. Med. Gaz.*, Oct. 6, 1843. T. R. B.

68. *Pregnancy in a Female who had never menstruated.*—M. VANDERSAVEL communicated to the Medical Society of Verviers a case of this description. The patient was twenty years old, and had a child born, without ever menstruating.

M. Rutten took occasion to say, that in the course of his long practice, he had seen three cases of this description. One was of a female, the mother of fourteen children, who had never menstruated during, nor in the intervals between pregnancy: the second was in a person aged thirty-two years; and the third was in one who became pregnant, but aborted. In none of these was there any vicarious hemorrhage or discharge; but what is remarkable, all were greatly tormented, and that constantly, with an insatiable thirst. One, indeed, was obliged to carry a water bottle on her person, to satisfy her incessant cravings. —*Archives de la Médecine Belge*, Aug. 1843.

69. *Orfila on Reinsch's process for detecting Arsenic.* (Translated from the Supplement to the last edition of his Toxicology.)—After detailing the various steps of the process, he adds that he wished to ascertain the advantages and the inconveniences of the process. *Experiment* 1. I boiled during half an hour, 7 grammes of copper slips with 291 grammes of fat broth, containing some drops of an aqueous solution of arsenious acid, previously acidulated with hydrochloric acid. The slips covered with a brownish layer after the operation, were heated in a glass tube, according to Reinsch's directions, and I obtained in one part of the tube a white ring, and in the other a ring coloured green and brown by chloride of copper and organic matter; the first of these rings *presented all the characters of arsenious acid*, whereas the second, treated with the agents proper for detecting that acid, did not exhibit the reactions peculiar to it.

Exp. 2.—I boiled half a liver of a dog poisoned by 6 decigrammes of arsenious acid, with slips of copper in water, which was well acidulated with hydrochloric acid; the slips became brown, at the same time retaining their brightness. Some of them, on being heated in a glass tube, gave a ring of arsenious acid, and some having been put into a Marsh's apparatus, scarcely furnished any arsenical stains.

New slips of copper were placed in the liquid at 5 o'clock in the evening, and remained therein the whole night; next day they were brown and tarnished. Heated in a glass tube, after being washed, they gave a ring which probably contained arsenious acid, but certainly containing chloride of copper and organic matter; consequently when this ring was treated by nitric acid, and the solution evaporated to dryness, the result was a product which proved *no* arsenical reactions.

Some of the slips having been heated in a current of dry hydrogen gas gave, with difficulty, three or four stains, whose aspect *was not arsenical*, and which was evidently formed by organic matter; by the reagents proper for indicating arsenic, it was impossible for me to prove the presence of that substance. Other slips having been placed in the liquid, which had already been twice acted upon by copper, acted precisely in the same way as those which were placed in it a second time; in the Marsh apparatus they produced not one stain.

The solid portion of the liver, which had not been dissolved in the hydrochloric acid, *retained much arsenic*, for, when incinerated with nitrate of potash, after having been previously well washed, it yielded a considerable quantity of that metal.

Exp. 3.—I treated several of the slips which had remained in the liquid with nitric acid, for the purpose of transforming the arsenic, which they might have contained, into insoluble arseniate of copper; I evaporated the liquid to dryness, in order to expel the excess of nitric acid, and I then dissolved the nitrate of copper in water. The precipitated arseniate of copper, after having been washed, was introduced into a Marsh's apparatus. The results which I obtained were so different from one another, that it was impossible to come to any decisive conclusion; in some cases I obtained a pretty considerable number of arsenical stains; in others I had less; finally, in others I had none at all. However, when I decomposed the arseniate by potash, before I introduced it into the apparatus, I constantly obtained arsenic.

I think I may conclude from the foregoing, that the process proposed by Reinsch is not nearly so valuable as its author would make it; *first*, because it is difficult, if not impossible, to dissolve in hydrochloric acid the whole of the arsenic contained in the organs into which it has been carried by absorption, (exp. 2.); and secondly, because, even granting that by employing *a great number of copper slips*, the whole of the arsenious acid had been extracted from the dissolution of hydrochloric acid mixed with organic matter, it would not be possible, by means of heat, to extract nearly all the arsenious acid, and which besides would perhaps not present all its characters, (exp. 1.); and finally, because it is not true that the hydrogen easily transforms the arsenic contained in the copper slips into arseniuretted hydrogen.

However, I see no inconvenience, and it may perhaps turn out to be advantageous, to test a *small quantity* of the suspected arsenical liquid by Reinsch's process; indeed, if after having boiled two or three slips of copper, and a few grammes of the liquid with hydrochloric acid during a few minutes, after a certain time they lose their colour, and seem to turn white, we may believe that they have taken arsenic from the liquid, and it will be sufficient to subject them to the heat of a lamp in a tube containing air, to obtain arsenious acid.

Guided by this result, the experimenter can afterwards extract the arsenic by treating the whole suspected mass with chlorine. It is indispensable, however, before making use of the copper, to ascertain that it does not, of itself, yield arsenic. The brown colour of the slips cannot be considered as an indication of the presence of arsenic, for they acquire that colour when put into a liquid which contains a little non-arsenical hydrochloric acid, especially when this contains organic matters.—*Chemist*, Nov. 1843. T. R. B.

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70. *A new process for the absolute distinction and separation of Arsenic from Antimony.* By W. Behrens. (*Journal de Pharmacie*, July, 1843.)

So many methods have lately been found for the distinction and separation of arsenic from antimony, in medico-legal investigations, and in particular, Pettenhofer's method, corrected by Fresenius, (see *American Journal of Medical Sciences*, New Series, Vol. vi. p. 499,) so well answers the object of the judges in the investigations concerning poisoning, that we are led to regard this subject as having arrived to the highest degree of perfection.